

Teaching Series: Saved for Eternity

Title: Session 12 – Eternal Security and Free Will

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Chapter 2: Objections against Eternal Salvation

License to Sin

Another objection to the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints (or eternal security) is that it tends to lead believers to indolence and license to sin. However, this is a perversion of the doctrine, possible only to the unregenerate people since the certainty of success is the most powerful incentive to walk in holiness to the born-again believers. The fact that God ensures true believers they will not lose salvation until the end doesn't cancel the need for good works and sanctification on the believers' part. The apostle Paul exhorts believers in Philippians 2:12 "to work out their salvation with fear and trembling." This doesn't mean good works represent the means to keep their salvation until the end, but these are the effect and the proof of true conversion. Again, I bring this illustration to your attention, with King Solomon, because it's a very good one. What did he look for when he decided to kill the living baby and share it between the two women who came to judgment? Did he look for a deed on the part of the women that would deserve or win the baby? Did he want to create a new relationship between the women and the baby that didn't exist before? Of course not! Instead, he was looking for a deed that would prove what was already true, an action that would show who that baby's birth mother was. True believers will always be in active striving to live in holiness until the end, and the certainty of success in this journey is the best possible stimulus.

Paul says in Romans 6:2: "How can we who died to sin continue to live in it?" Why would you think to do evil when you repented and came on God's side? Why would you want to sin when you no longer have a sinful nature, and you can live an abundant life of absolute joy, peace, health, and prosperity? Can God do whatever He wants? Yes, of course! Does that give Him license to sin? Never, because His freedom and free will have boundaries; they are informed and determined by His nature. God wants believers to walk in holiness because they want to and love to, not out of fear and constraints. We need to trust the powerful and tangible transformation God does in believers through the Holy Spirit and not try to control people through fear.

The Confusion Regarding Human Free Will

This objection sounds like this: "If genuine believers cannot lose their salvation and don't have the actual option of rejecting Christ if they wanted to, after they got saved, then they don't really have free

will anymore.” Such an objection is based on the false assumption that human free will is not influenced by anything, is not bound to neither depends on the inherent nature of the person in any way, which can be either sinful from the first Adam, or righteous from the last Adam, Jesus Christ.

God Himself has complete free will. However, He will never choose to embrace evil or Satan’s ways. He will never even want to do such a thing, His free will is completely bound to His righteous nature. That is how genuine believers are after salvation as well. God does such a powerful change in their nature through the Holy Spirit that they will never want to choose with their free will to reject God and lose their salvation. The only reason believers’ free will doesn’t seem bound entirely yet to the new holy nature of their spirit here on earth is that their mind is not yet wholly renewed.

The free will of the first Adam was not utterly dependent on his nature before the fall. Why? It’s because even though he had a holy nature inside, he was still capable of committing a sin that could change his nature into darkness: eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Even the free will of lost people before salvation is not entirely dependent on their sinful nature. Why? Because under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and at the hearing of the Gospel message, they can make a decision that will completely recreate them spiritually. However, after salvation, born-again believers become one spirit with the Trinity (1 Corinthians 6:17). Their will is still free but now dependent on the holy nature inside them in regard to eternal salvation.

I heard some believers saying that the reason we have the Holy Spirit in us now is to help us sanctify ourselves so that we can maintain our salvation to the end, and that we should employ His help using our free will, the same way we used our free will to accept salvation and be born again. While it is true that we need the Holy Spirit’s help for sanctification and that our will is involved in this process, it is not true that maintaining our salvation relies entirely on our choice to use the Holy Spirit’s help. Let’s read Romans 4:1-8,

Romans 4:1–8 (NKJV)

- ¹ *What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh?*
- ² *For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.*
- ³ *For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham **believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.**”*
- ⁴ *Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt.*
- ⁵ *But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness,*
- ⁶ *just as David also describes **the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works:***
- ⁷ *“Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered;*
- ⁸ *Blessed is the man to whom the LORD shall not impute sin.”*

Abraham lived in a time when the Law of Moses had not been given yet and the Holy Spirit was

not living in him to help him do works of holiness. He did not have any other way of maintaining his salvation or righteousness, except through faith according to the passage above. Moreover, at Verse 6, King David described the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from his works (separated and independent of our good works) and he was referring to the future new creations in Christ. Were Abraham and King David in a better position than us, the believers in Christ? I am asking this because their lives seem to have been much simpler than ours by not having to maintain their righteousness by works. They only had faith and that was enough, and Abraham is the father of the seed of Christ, to whom all believers belong to. So, even though we use our free will to employ the Holy Spirit's help and strength in doing works of holiness which we need to pursue, these have no value in maintaining our righteousness. They are only a means of releasing more and more God's inheritance that resides in us, on the outside, and manifesting the gift of righteousness in us in increasing measure. These works will also receive reward in the future life.

Renouncing Salvation by Free Will

There is a teaching in the body of Christ that, based on Hebrews 6:4–6 (a text which was already covered), there is a slight possibility of genuine believers to lose their salvation through their own free choice. This teaching says you can't sin your salvation away, but you can renounce it. Rejecting your faith isn't quickly done, but it is possible. Before someone would ever renounce such a great salvation, they would have to become hardened toward God (Hebrews 3:13–14). Although your spirit is unaffected by sin, your body and soul are altered, because your perception, wisdom, and understanding of who you are in the spirit gets dulled. If you persist in sin long enough, you can come to a place where Satan would try to make you renounce your faith in Christ with your voice. And if you leave your faith and reject God, you can throw your salvation away. These teachers say it's not something you lose without knowing, like, for example, misplaced car keys. This rejection is done deliberately and openly. That's something that takes place over some time. However, the proponents of this view admit not many fall away in this manner.

First, such a possibility of genuine born-again believers renouncing their salvation consciously can never be proved empirically. Even the advocates of this perspective admit it's almost impossible. So, then I ask, why, for the sake of a 0.000001% possibility of renouncing salvation, would we consider it as a teaching to bring an unjustified fear to the 99.99999% of saved people who will never give up on their faith? If you put just a tiny drop of ink in a cup full of clean water, the whole water will change its color. Such a possibility of renouncing salvation through our free will cancels completely any assurance of salvation or eternal security. Second, there is no clear Bible verse, like Romans 10:9–10, affirming that the new creations can become unsaved by confessing with the mouth that they no longer want Jesus in their lives. Such a possibility is crucial and should have been explicitly mentioned in the Bible. Third, does the Devil have a greater power of conviction upon people, to give up on their salvation deliberately, than the Holy Spirit Who convinced them of the truth of the Gospel, regenerated them, and intercedes

continuously for them before God? Of course not! Lucifer and the first Adam renounced their state of perfect holiness by their own free choice in a perfect heaven and earth, without being hardened by sin or having their perception blinded. Even more, in a world full of evil, temptations, appetites and bad habits which are against us as believers, the probability that we can renounce our salvation is exponentially increased unless God keeps us by the power of the Holy Spirit and preserves our salvation, as well as our desire never to reject it by our free will:

Jude 1:24 (NKJV)

²⁴ *Now to Him **Who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.***

Another variation of this teaching is that those who renounce their salvation in Christ by their free will, are very mature spiritually and know exactly what they are doing. However, how can a mature person in Christ make such a foolish and immature decision? It's impossible, because even humanly speaking, the more mature you are, the wiser decisions you take. All the more, that is true spiritually speaking.

Someone once asked: "If a born-again Christian turns his back on God, becomes a satanist and does a covenant with the Devil, will he still be saved?" If a person manages to do a functional covenant with Satan, that means he was not regenerated. In that case, while he lives, he still has a chance to come to Christ. In the case of those genuinely born-again, I think it's impossible for them to accomplish a pact with the Devil and I will explain why I believe so. First, at the moment of salvation, people become "owned" by the Lord Jesus if I may say so, although the term sounds a bit harsh, but He is the best owner to be under! People under this authority and ownership would never want to leave willingly out of it. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 that they are not their own:

1 Corinthians 6:19–20 (NKJV)

¹⁹ *Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and **you are not your own?***

²⁰ *For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, **which are God's.***

Moreover, Jesus promised to protect those under His ownership so that no one can snatch them from His hand:

John 10:27–28 (NKJV)

²⁷ *My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.*

²⁸ *And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; **neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.***

Second, the covenant made with Jesus at salvation is not a contract that can be canceled anytime we want. It is a forever blood covenant. I don't think we fully grasp in our day and age the strength and extent of a blood covenant like ancient people understood it. The Devil may try to overwrite or replace that covenant with another, but he will fail. I believe it's possible that some born-again believers may attempt to make a pact with the Devil out of frustration or lack of understanding and knowledge, but I don't think it will work. They might even try to manifest some satanic behaviors. However, in the end, they will either come to their senses and return to Christ after a while, or they will be saved as through fire.